

2/8/70

Dear Dick,

In the past several weeks I've kind of lost track of some things. Aside from Howard's visit, which I enjoyed, but which took my mind off of what I'd been working on, I've been disturbed first by blacking out two weeks ago and then by the seeming indifference of the medical coop, which costs us about \$500 a year. So, there may be things about which I should have written you and didn't and I may have and not recall it, confusing this with what I've written others as I've responded to their letters.

The weather has moderated, most of the snow is gone, and I spent some time yesterday taking the unwanted locusts down. It was warm enough to be comfortable in a pair of shirts, no other upper covering. Thanks to a neighbor who came with his chain saw after I got started, some of this is cut up and I've got a fire of sorts in the fireplace, always pleasant, even though green wood is reluctant to accomodate. And, even if we have more inclement weather, just trimming out what is now down will give me an opportunity for some daily exercise when there is no precipitation. It has, actually, been six weeks since the weather permitted reasonable outdoor activity to a man who wasn't going to keep warm and dry with consistent activity.

I presume the end of one term and the beginning of the next have kept you busier than usual. Perhaps you got away for a few days to enjoy your own outdoors. However, there are two things from which I'd like to hear from you as soon as you have time. You should have received both parts of COUP from Paul by now. I've added a chapter and I've about completed the appendix, which really means eliminating a major part of what I'd planned for it and footnoting the rest. I'm holding off on locking these two things up because there may be developments that should be included. Thus I haven't xeroxed and sent to Paul. He, Jim and Hal have found things that required changing in part II. I am anxious to get finished with it and return to the autopsy work, partly because I have wanted to for too long, partly to get it done and on to other things, including getting more of what has been withheld in this area, and partly to better cope with the harm John is in a position to do with this. So, if you have suggestions to make re COUP II, I'd like them as soon as you can make them. The easiest way, since I have several sets identical with yours, is to measure down from the top line on each page. Unless it is urgent, I will not want to make corrections that require the change of more than a line. "I" is so busy with her own work she is bringing it home nights and starting an hour earlier at the office. This will continue to mid-April. She has had to lay the indexing aside with but 50 pages to go. And she does the typing, mine being so terrible. Especially in the area of the ballistics evidence, however, can you be of great help, for there is always the chance I have erred, or misunderstood what you have told me, or paid attention to the people at the local gunshop, who are not as lucid as you, when I may not have really understood what they were saying. While I have no prospects of immediate publication, I have prompted some interest and such a thing is not outside possibility.

With regard to John I have solicited your suggestions and Gary's. This also means your advise and help, for above all, I want to keep him from blowing the remaining chances of advancing in these areas, including the obtaining of new data. Because I feel deeply hurt by what he has done and is doing, my own judgement, on which I will ultimately act, cannot be as detached.

He phoned me twice from Washington. The first time he asked if we would be getting together. He pretended not to have received the second of my longer letters to him, which is improbable. But I gave him my schedule, kept to it, and he made it a point not to be where we'd meet. I began with a brief medical stop, went to Bud's office, a block from John's hotel, stayed there an hour, and, as I told John, returned there from the Archives prepared to drive him to Bethesda. There was no John, no message. He phoned the next day, adding nothing but more lameness.

His reasoning stuns me. Having learned of these things after his own failures in the same areas, and having, as a condition, promised not to touch them, including in writing which I quoted to him without response, he now says only that he'd have returned to repeat the same inquiries and, of course, on repetition, he'd have forced this out. Simultaneous with this he also tells me he is going to sue for the autopsy authorization on the opposite ground, that even after he has the copy he blackjacked from me they deny having it (which I simply cannot believe, for they have been trying to tell me that it has been in the proper place all along). Aside from everything else, how can a man say this is what I would have done. You know I also had my doubts about the shells. I had been the first to cast any doubt on them in writing. I do not now recall the details, but I think in our correspondence I raised questions about them you did not. We worked on this together. But I had dropped it, and whether or not I'd had an earlier interest, how can I say that without you I'd have returned to this? I regard this as yours, for it is you who are really responsible for what is now established, whether or not it is all that ever will be. More, you went to great trouble and expense on this. Yet he copyrighted the work you sent him, not doubt having convinced himself it was really his anyway. That kind of mind is impossible to cope with, as is that kind of morality.

Howard overheard my end of both conversations with John, not, the second. He was in Bud's office waiting for me when I went back to get him and John or John's message. When he asked me questions, I suddenly recalled my earlier efforts at LOOK. These go back to the summer of 1966 with the autopsy material, then what I have in WWII. I also offered them what John is stealing and I submitted the entire PM ms and documentation to their affiliate. Cowles, having the rejections of both in writing. I have not consulted a lawyer about this, but it seems to me it destroys any defense they could offer if they now buy any of this material from John, as his. I will write them about this, but I do not want to do this to John unless there is no alternative, regardless of what kind of bastard he is. These publishing enterprises are so large they may not have or may not be able to locate our correspondence, but I do, and I can produce those who in one case acted as intermediary.

If John persists, I am certain I'll sue, if I have to be my own lawyer, if LOOK publishes or if he uses in any way. I'd rather not, but aside from the other and obvious considerations, at some point we have to cleanse ourselves.

I've heard from John since he returned, but not responsively to my letters. Gary had asked him to carry on with Betzner. John here has created a new fiction, that he has to hear from me before going back to the Betznors (where I believe the only problem has been John). He sent me a copy of Gary's letter to the Betznors, clearly showing Gary has sent it me me-is says so-and asks if I still want him to get a print for me, although he has my correspondence on this, including the sworn statement I gave the Betznors. What this pretense serves in his mind I do not know, but it is all unreal.

In any event, this is unpleasant, and in asking you to do anything about it I am asking you to associate yourself with unpleasantness. That you may not want to is understandable. If this is the case, I'd like to know it and I'll not wait to hear from you about it further.

In other autopsy areas, I am also going forward. The delays in mail between us have discouraged my sending you some things. Perhaps you have understood some of my ellipsis. On one of the things John is stealing + have a considerable improvement, what Bud, as a lawyer, says is the most significant thing yet. I think it is possible that between what I have said and what you may detect in what Howard will be saying you'll get it.

Howard provided me with the one thing I needed to do something I'd been holding back on since 1/69. I sent you the letters I wrote asking for the raw material of the panel's work, I believe. I now have the written assurance of the DJ that this does not "exist" in their files. Bud willing, as he concedes, this is all I need for an immediate suit on that. With any kind of luck, that alone should be enough to overload the fan. There is a remaining possibility and I have written the Archives to see if it has been sent there so very early and when the DJ knows litigation is pending.

Howard agrees with me on two things re my interpretations of the 399 pix. He is now satisfied that what I told you is the case. He is satisfied lighting is not the explanation. From what he told me, I think it is possible that John's sudden interest in pictures duplicating mine stems from your telling John of the Tink fragment. Could you give me the date of that, or a copy, please? The Archives has not responded to my request for a copy of John's order. Nor have they sent me a duplicate of the negative of the picture they took for him. I have written them a second time asking that they duplicate the picture they took for me, and there is silence. Now, if you take these two things: assume I am right in my interpretation and assume that it is my picture they say is John's, I think you may come to some interesting conclusions of your own. I have the prints I ordered of "John's" and they are not, they are of mine. Howard agrees, says there can be no question. What remains in question is what they sent or took for John.

It is getting light and lo! it is snowing again.

Time is always a question and a problem. There are other things I have been doing that may or may not be of interest to you. I have established the existence of at least twice as much Ferrie material as the government ever conceded it had. They have refused to give me the list they ~~said~~ released in 1967 (who can blame them?). I have found the file in which this once was, and it is so gutted but a single one of the more than three dozen pages is still there. I have a record, in a single file, of about five dozen people mentioned in association with him, the docs being suppressed. And I have the proof that there was a NOPD investigation of him at least in connection with his Cuban activities before the assassination. This, obviously, has been suppressed also. Can you think of an innocent explanation of its suppression, or Liebel's failure to use it? I do not know if this fits with your interest in Dempsey (did you ask him about Ferrie?), but on the chance, I mention it. I plan to include these documents in my suit, for I have two of those suppressed and there is no possible legitimate basis for withholding. There are also other things involved too complicated to go into here...and my quail have just come up to the window- a dozen and a half of them. They look at me while they feed. I can move without frightening them if I move slowly. I haven't been out to feed them yet this a.m., so they are scratching like chickens, in the snow, looking for what is not there... Anyway, separate from Garrison, from whom I have never gotten anything about Ferrie, I am now satisfied my original, 1966 suspicion is warranted. This says enough yet not enough. But it also tells me the government knows what it feels it must hide. We now also have proof of an FBI pre-assassination investigation of the LHO-Cuban connection and that it tried to hide this from the Commission. Again, enough yet not enough. Ditto, Intel. Div, NOPD, the reports seemingly having disappeared. There is reason to believe there was also a Ferrie inv. by the La. State Police, pre-ass.

As the quail have left and returned, this circles me back to where I began, telling you that I want to finish COUP, get it out of my mind, and return to

other work, first the autopsy, then AGENT OSWALD. There is much to be done with both, too much to do well with a cluttered mind.

Is there any chance you may be able to come here again during your Spring break? I think it might be helpful in a number of ways, one of which is going over my file of correspondence with the Archives and another, if you have the interest, in rummaging through the Cuban materials I have. I have not yet gotten Bringuier's book. The only libels in it of which I know are immune to suit, but, knowing Bringuier, I can expect others. Bud ordered this book before pub date, but it has not come. If you want to read but do not want to buy "Special Unit Senator" I have it and can lend it to you. I had my own and not very satisfactory connection with them, briefly.

Best,